

The decision by Sinclair Broadcasting's to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry "documentary" only days before the election is a clear violation of the public trust they hold as licensees of the airways, as well as another example of the dangers of media consolidation.

As a condition of use of the public airwaves free of charge, Sinclair is obligated BY LAW to serve the public interest. However, when large companies control these airwaves, we get more of what's good for their bottom lines, rather than what is in the nation's interest - and needed for a healthy democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities, or at the very least regions, and more substantive news about issues that matter, presented in a truly balanced way. This is patently NOT the case with Sinclair (or, for that matter, by the GOP's other broadcast arm, Fox).

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They also demonstrate why the license renewal process needs to involve far more than merely a returned pro-forma postcard. Finally, we must reintroduce the "Fairness Doctrine".

Thank you.